

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim 1, 3-4, 6-7 and 8 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Suzuki et al. (US 6,245,982).

Regarding Claim 1: Suzuki et al. discloses an audio reproduction method when reproducing audio data to which character data for displaying a character having a specific shape and motion data for indicating motion of the character having the shape specified by said character data are added, comprising the steps of: generating data on an image having the shape specified by said character data by analyzing the character data (**column 1 lines 39-47**), and displaying the generated image data correspondingly to the reproduction of said audio data (**column 1 lines 39-53**), wherein said character data is data on the shape of each part of said character and said motion data indicates where a specific part of said character is altered and displayed at a coordinate position at a specific time in audio reproduction (**column 1 lines 54-59**).

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Regarding Claim 3: Suzuki et al. discloses an audio reproduction method according to claim 1, wherein said character data is data on a character having a three-dimensional shape, and based on a predetermined input operation the character to be displayed is made into a character having a shape seen from an arbitrary viewpoint (**column 8 line 64 to column 9 line 10**).

Regarding Claim 4: Suzuki et al. discloses an audio reproduction apparatus comprising: retaining means for retaining audio data to which character data for displaying a character having a specific shape and motion data indicating motion of the character having the shape specified by character data are added (**column 1 lines 39-47**), audio reproducing means for processing to reproduce the audio data retained in said retaining means (**column 1 lines 39-47**), image processing means for generating data on an image having the shape specified by the character data by analyzing the character when character data is added to the audio data reproduced in said audio reproducing means (**column 1 lines 47-59**), and display means for displaying image data generated in said image processing means correspondingly to the reproduction in said audio reproducing means in accordance with the motion indicated by motion data (**column 1 lines 60-67**), wherein said character data is data on the shape of each part of said character and said motion data indicates where a specific part of said character is altered and displayed at a coordinate position at a specific time in audio reproduction (**column 1 lines 54-59**).

Regarding Claim 6: Suzuki et al. discloses an audio reproduction apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the character data added to the audio data retained in said retaining

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means is data on a character having a three-dimensional shape (**column 8 line 64 to column 9 line 10**), operating means for indicating a viewpoint toward the character having a three-dimensional shape is provided (**column 8 line 64 to column 9 line 10**), and based on the viewpoint indicated by said operating means, the image data generated in said image processing means is made into an image of a character seen from the viewpoint (**column 8 line 64 to column 9 line 10**).

Regarding Claim 7: Suzuki et al. discloses an audio reproduction method according to claim 1, wherein said motion data is described in VRML (Virtual Reality Modeling Language) (**column 14 lines 52-53**).

Regarding Claim 8: Suzuki et al. discloses an audio reproduction apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said motion data is described in VRML (Virtual Reality Modeling Language) (**column 14 lines 52-53**).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to DANIEL TEKLE whose telephone number is (571)270-1117. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30am to 5:00pm M-R and 7:30-4:00 Every other Friday..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Marsha D. Banks-Harold can be reached on 571-272-7905. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Marsha D. Banks-Harold/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2621

/Daniel Tekle/
Examiner, Art Unit 2621